

THE BAPTIST Record

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Super Summer intensifies commitment

CLINTON, Miss. (Special) — Super Summer 2000 lived up to its name July 24-28 as over 400 Mississippi Baptists gathered in A.E. Wood Coliseum on the campus of Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton for a week of intense discipleship and ministry training.

More than 325 of the attendees were students. Other attendees included youth and campus ministers who served as executive staff, and college students and youth ministers who served as team leaders.

Super Summer is an annual camp ministry sponsored by the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department (DFM) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

Super Summer week consists of over six hours daily of intense worship and discipleship instruction.

The week is divided into "schools," based on the number of years an individual student has attended Super Summer and the grade level he/she will be entering for the next school year.

In order to attend Super Summer, a number of criteria must be met:

- Sharing their faith with at least one person.
- Giving their testimony to their church or youth group.
- Memorizing at least ten verses of Scripture.
- Being involved in a discipleship group.
- Recognition by a minister from their church that they have shown a desire to deepen their relationship with Christ and lead by example.

Each night during Super Summer, there is a special time of worship called Rainbow Celebration. Gregg Matte from Bryan, Texas, was the speaker for this year's Rainbow Celebration times.

Matte challenged the students and spoke of the power God offers believers to rise above the popular culture to reach unsaved peers.

Humanity to build affordable houses for low income people, while others helped at the Community Stewpot, a local homeless shelter.

The theme for Super Summer 2000 was "Color Your World," based on Rom. 12:2.

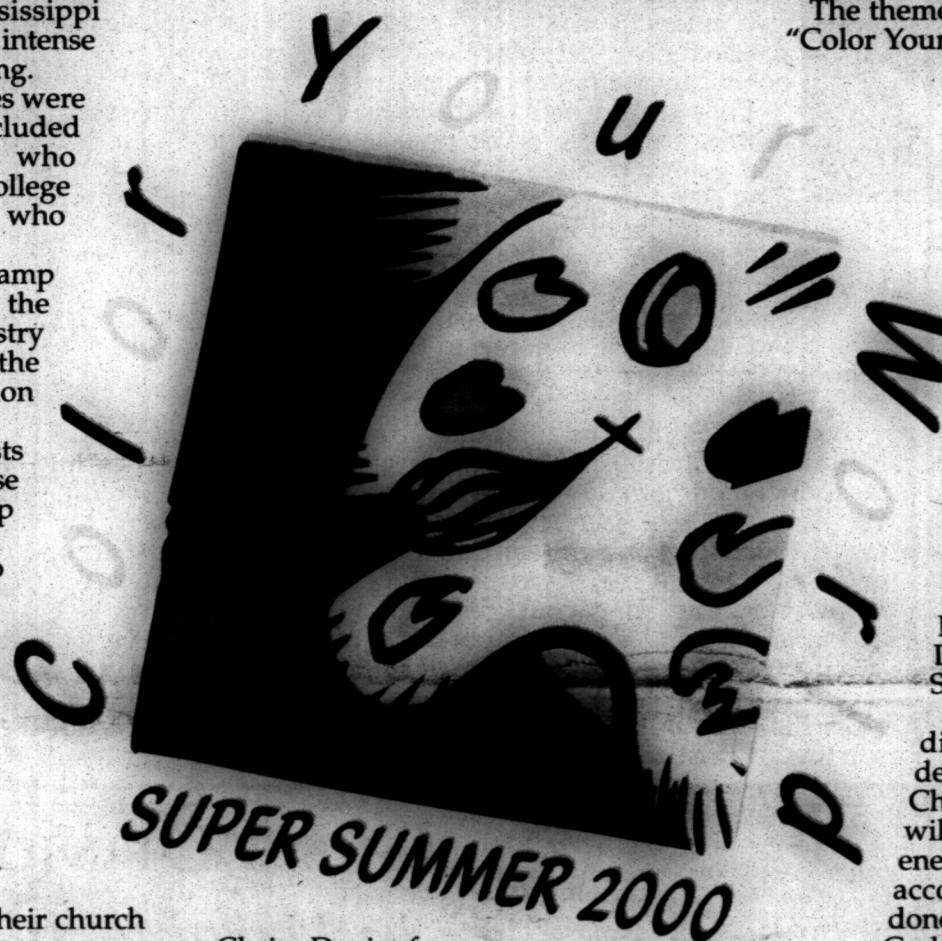
Attendees were challenged to color the world with the message of Christ. That message was driven home by colorful tie-dye T-shirts with a cross prominently displayed on the front, worn by Super Summer participants.

"There is no doubt that God has blessed us in some incredible ways during Super Summer, and another reason for the program's success is the unselfish giving of youth and campus ministers from around our state," said Harvey Ellis, consultant in the DFM department and Super Summer coordinator.

"They see the importance of discipling students to grow deeper in their commitment to Christ, and they are more than willing to give their time and energy to help see that this is accomplished. It could not be done without them, and I thank God for the privilege of working with these ministers," Ellis said.

The dates for Super Summer 2001 are July 16-20 at Mississippi College in Clinton. A planning retreat for the 2001 event will be held Nov. 12 at Lake Tiak O'khata outside Louisville, prior to the Youth Minister's Workshop.

For more information on the Super Summer program, contact Ellis at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3286 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 286. E-mail: hgellis@mbcb.org.



Chris Davis from Birmingham led praise and worship each evening.

The Rainbow Celebration times lasted at least two hours each night and were often attended by over 100 guests in addition to the Super Summer participants.

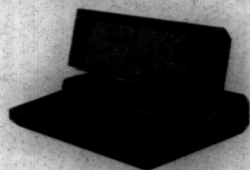
The Super Summer program stresses the importance of participants putting what they have learned into practice. This year, many of the members of the Super Summer schools did mission work in the Jackson area.

Some worked with Habitat for



Super Summer 2000 participants

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Southern Baptists' secret weapon

Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, tells the story of the high-powered, nationally-recognized church growth consultant who was brought in to advise the church in the mid-1970's.

His final report was quite pessimistic. One big concern, as the consultant saw it, was that First Church was located downtown, not along the edge of an emerging metropolitan growth pattern into the surrounding suburbs. There were other major problems, too. All in all, the consultant wasn't very high on the church's future, Pollard recalled.

In the 25 years since then, however, First Church has remained downtown, tripled its membership, embarked on several building programs totaling more than \$50,000,000, gobbled up much-needed land for parking as it has become available around the church, and initiated an extensive inner-city ministry to reach the residents of neighborhoods left behind by the rush to the suburbs.

Pollard said he saw the consultant at a meeting some time later and gave him a good-natured ribbing about his wayward prediction on the future of the church.

"He told me, 'I forgot about Southern Baptists' secret weapon — Sunday School. Southern Baptists can get adults to come to Sunday School,'" Pollard quoted the consultant as explaining.

Indeed, Southern Baptists (and Mississippi Baptists) have a potent secret weapon in our Sunday School program. We have a potent secret weapon against losing touch with church members in need or crisis, a potent secret weapon to foster fellowship, mutual encouragement, and accountability, and — most important of all — a potent secret weapon to fight the influence of the evil one who seeks to accomplish his nefarious and destructive work wherever Christians gather.

Those are points Southern Baptists and Mississippi Baptists have understood and taken seriously to heart for virtually the whole of our existence. Southern Baptists long ago established the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville (now LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention), and Mississippi Baptists chose to place a Sunday School department under the aegis of their work at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson.

Granted, Sunday School is not the only element that composes a growing church body, but it would be an immensely difficult task to find a thriving congregation that didn't have an effective Sunday School organization at its core.

Large church or small, 10 workers or 1,000, Sunday School is pivotal in the life of the church.

That's good food for thought as nominating committees in churches across Mississippi begin the task of recruiting Sunday School volunteer workers for the new church year, which is just around the corner.

Fortunate is the church that is able to fill all its worker slots — fortunate, and rare. Just about every Mississippi Baptist church has multiple openings that go unfilled during the church year.

Don't let that be the case in your church. Be in prayer about the role that the Lord

"MY WIFE AND I ARE WAITING ON AN INVITATION TO A SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS."



wants you to fill, and be open to your church's nominating committee when you are approached about taking an active part in Sunday School — or any of the other equally important leadership positions in your church.

You can be sure they've already been in prayer about this matter, and you can be a living, breathing answer to those prayers.

If not you, then who? Think about it.

GUEST OPINION:

In Ukraine, it's harvest time

By John A. Thomas, pastor
Morrison Chapel Church, Cleveland

village, we encountered an 89-year-old man named Denise Antonyuk. When we told him who we were and why we were there, you should have seen the look on his face!

Denise told us he became a Christian in 1942, and because of his faith he was imprisoned in Siberia for ten years. He was starved and neglected, and at one point weighed 75 pounds.



CUTLINE — John Thomas (left) pastor of Morrison Chapel Church, Cleveland; Ken West, (right), director of missions for Washington Association, Greenville; and translator Natasha Kaurova (second from left) visit with 89-year-old Denise Antonyuk during a recent mission trip to Ukraine. (BR special photo)

He described how soldiers often would come to his house after he became a believer and confiscate his Bibles. He began to memorize Scripture, and as he told us his story he would quote Scripture.

As he looked at us through sharp, blue-steel eyes and shared his testimony, I was blessed to be in the presence of one who had almost died for his faith. The Apostle Paul reminds us to honor men like Denise (Phil. 2:29-30).

I am thankful to folks like Thomas and June Nolen, field-side coordinators for the Mississippi/Ukraine Baptist partnership. They did not go for a mission trip, but for the mission. I am thankful for International Mission Board missionary Dale Ledbetter and others who are not serving for the short term, but for eternal purposes.

Most of all, I am thankful for the blessing and privilege to be on mission with God where he is at work — and he is definitely at work in Ukraine.

As we departed Denise's village, I noticed that many of the wheat fields were ripe and ready to harvest. Mississippi Baptists, we must seize this moment to harvest the souls of Ukraine for Christ.

They are ready. Are you?

Ridgecrest camps build faith, confidence

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Lake Ridgecrest shimmered under the morning sunlight as campers woke to the sound of revelry and the smell of breakfast. It's the start of a new day

filled with activities and fun for the boys of Camp Ridgecrest.

Across the road, the girls of Camp Crestridge are rising and shining too. Shouting good morning in unison and singing

songs while standing in chairs, these girls were getting ready for a day of fun.

The camps, operated by Ridgecrest, a LifeWay Conference Center, are located in the eastern mountains of North Carolina and offer girls and boys a chance to learn new skills, make new friends, and live away from home for a few weeks. Campers can attend for two, four, or eight weeks.

Ron Springs, camp director, said by the end of the summer 1,200 campers will have stayed at the camps this year.

The campers choose skill activities to participate in throughout their stay. Activities include riflery, archery, horseback riding, tennis, soccer, basketball, canoeing, swimming, and arts and crafts.

The boys can also choose from rocketry (where they build a rocket and send it off), weight lifting, Indian lore and mountain biking. The girls can take gymnastics, choir, drama, Tae Bo, water trampoline, and aerobics.

New activities available to both camps are a climbing wall and a low ropes course. The campers also do age group activities such as water balloon and sock wars and capture the flag.

Springs said campers hail from up to 30 different states, two-thirds of them from Florida and Georgia, and some foreign countries. They range in age from seven to 16. The campers are led by a group of

counselors who were either former campers or were recruited from colleges and Baptist Student Unions.

Parents can relieve any stress they might have about their traveling children by logging onto an Internet site powered by a company called iluvcamp. Armed with a user name and password, parents can check into their children's daily camp activities and even see photographs of what they have been doing.

The camps also are using the Internet as a recruiting tool. Three years ago five campers came as a result of the Internet, Springs said, that number was about 150 this year. The big draw for the campers is seeing friends



A LITTLE TIGHTER — Instructor Phillip Berry (left), director of the Outdoor Adventure program at Camp Ridgecrest, operated by Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina, helps camper Robert Ayerst with his safety helmet. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy).

LifeWay best sellers

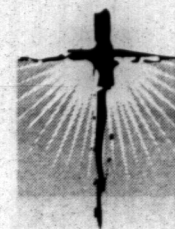
HARDBACK

1. Payne Stewart, by Tracey Stewart (B&H)
2. Praying Gods Word, by Beth Moore (B&H)
3. Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire, by Jim Cymbala (Zondervan)
4. Man God Uses, by Henry Blackaby, (B&H)
5. Things Pondered, by Beth Moore (B&H)
6. Fresh Faith, by Jim Cymbala (Zondervan)
7. Heart Like His, by Beth Moore (B&H)
8. Experiencing God Day By Day, by Henry Blackaby (B&H)
9. Are We Living in the End Times, by Tim LaHaye (Tyndale)
10. Grace for the Moment, by Max Lucado (Countryman)

PAPERBACK

1. Power of a Praying Wife, by Stormie Omartian (Harvest)
2. God Chasers, by Tommy Tenney (Destiny Image)
3. Jesus Freaks, by Various Authors (Albury)
4. Five Love Languages, by Gary Chapman (Moody)
5. Experiencing God, by Henry Blackaby (B&H)
6. Power of a Praying Parent, by Stormie Omartian (Harvest)
7. Bad Girls of the Bible, by Liz Curtis Higgs
8. I Kissed Dating Goodbye, by Joshua Harris (Multnomah)
9. Case for Christ, by Lee Strobel (Zondervan)
10. Gentle Spirit, by Various Authors (Barbour)

Source: LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention



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BAPTISTS

THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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Commission wants four on repression list

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has recommended the State Department add four governments to the list of "countries of particular concern" (CPC) first compiled last year.

In a letter to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the congressionally-established panel suggested Laos, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Turkmenistan be on the list to be released by the department in September. These countries "have engaged in par-

ticularly severe violations of religious freedom," commission chairman Elliott Abrams said.

The commission also recommended the seven regimes designated as CPCs in 1999 be kept on the list. They are Burma, China, Iran, Iraq, Serbia, Sudan, and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The State Department's selection of these governments came in the first year of a process established by the enactment of the International Religious Freedom Act in 1998.

In the letter to Albright, the commission's reasoning for recommending CPC designation for the four countries included:

- In Laos, Protestants, Baha'is (Muslims) and Catholics increasingly have been arrested and imprisoned for practicing their faith.

- North Korea represses all religious expression "except that which serves the interests of the state," making it apparent religious liberty does not exist.

- Saudi Arabia bans all forms of public religious activity other than that practiced by Wahabi Muslims.

- In Turkmenistan, only the Sunni Muslim Board and the Russian Orthodox Church are recognized as legal religious entities. Suppression of other religious communities includes destruction of places of worship.

The commission noted four other countries where "grave violations of religious freedom" are either practiced or tolerated by governments. They are India, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. The panel said the president should take action related to these countries, as well as those designated as CPCs. Two of the nine panel members, Michael Young and Nina Shea, dissented.

Looking back

10 years ago

A group of Illinois Baptist women is commissioned by Country Woods Church, Byram, for mission work in Mississippi as part of a partnership between the two states. The women spend a week at Crestwood Baptist Center in Jackson, conducting Vacation Bible School and sorting clothing.

20 years ago

The American Bible Society commends Mississippi Baptists for providing funds to purchase 150,000 Bibles in the Pashito language for Afghanistan refugees in Pakistan who have fled the Soviet Union's invasion of their homeland. A reprinting will be necessary to meet demand, the society reported.

50 years ago

A revival meeting at Hamilton Street Chapel in Brookhaven ends after 25 continuous days during which more than 200 decisions are recorded. Less than half of the crowd each night could be accommodated, and the baptismal pool — completed only six weeks ago — has been in constant use.

Annuity Board to increase medical rates

SAN DIEGO, Calif. (BP) — Trustees of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) have approved a Jan. 1, 2001, rate increase for participants in the board's Personal Security Program and Employer Security Program medical plans including Medicare primary plans.

The Personal Security Program and smaller groups in the Employer Security Program will receive a 12-month rate increase of 22%. Larger groups in the Employer Security Program will also receive increases for 2001. Notification of the specific increases will be sent to employers before the middle of September.

"A double-digit rate increase is significant for our participants, but it is needed to maintain the integrity of our medical products," said Doug Day, managing director for insurance services. "This increase was necessary because of the rising costs of health care and prescription drugs, the high utilization of medical services by our participants and our claim expenses continuing to outpace our annual premiums."

"We hope the recent changes in the prescription drug program and the introduction of two Medicare supplement

plans in 2001 will help stabilize our medical plans and reduce future rate increases," Day added.

Day also announced the introduction of several new insurance products in the coming months.

This fall the Annuity Board is making available a long-term care product to its participants. The coverage will be provided through the General Electric Capital Assurance Company, the long-term care division of GE Financial Assurance.

Effective Jan. 1, 2001, the Annuity Board will also begin offering several dental plan choices to participants in the Personal Security Program.

Reports concerning new products and services made possible by enhancements to the Annuity Board's mission statement and ministry assignment, as approved by the Southern Baptist Convention, were also heard by the agency's trustees during their July 31-Aug. 1 summer meeting in San Diego.

O.S. Hawkins, president and chief executive officer, expressed praise to God and thanks to the Southern Baptist Convention for expanding the Annuity Board's mission statement and ministry assignments.

"This action will make it possible for us to more fully achieve our vision to become a LifePartner with our participants. Through personal investing and institutional investment management services, we will have new avenues of service opened to us," Hawkins said.

Until the recent ministry assignment enhancements approved during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in June in Orlando, Fla., the Annuity Board primarily offered retirement and insurance plans to its participants.

Now, with the addition of personal investing, other-than-retirement investment options will be available to Annuity Board participants and their spouses.

"Our staff is diligently working to recommend the selection of strategic vendors that will help us to make the new products and services a success," said John Jones, executive vice president and chief operating officer. "We anticipate rolling out these new offerings sometime in 2001."

Also scheduled for 2001 will be Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) for Annuity Board participants and their spouses. Jim Morrison, managing director for retirement services, reported on the progress of this initiative.

Ross to join Southwestern faculty

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — A key architect of the worldwide True Love Waits abstinence campaign is joining the faculty of Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

Richard Ross, youth ministry consultant for LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville, Tenn., for the past 16 years, will begin teaching in youth ministry at Southwestern in August.

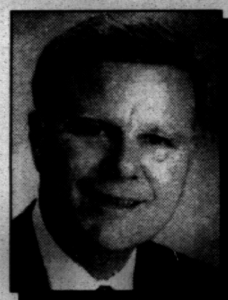
Ross earned a master of religious education and a Ph.D. in youth ministry from Southwestern Seminary. He earned his bachelor's degree at Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas. Ross taught as an adjunct professor at Southwestern for four years. He has written or compiled 16 books on youth ministry, many of which have been classroom texts in Southern Baptist colleges and seminaries.

THE COST OF AN ARGUMENT

How long has it been since you had an argument with someone? For some, you will only have to think back an hour or so. For others, you may have to dig back into your memory weeks, or months, or possibly even years, to a time when you had a real, serious, sobering disagreement with someone. Arguments are not uncommon. Friends have arguments. Married folks argue. Unmarried folks have spats. Business people argue. There are even professional arguers called lawyers.

Arguments can be expensive. The other day I was standing in a room with several people and among them was a lady talking on her cell-phone. She was not paying attention to any of us and we didn't particularly need to be paying attention to her, for she was fussing with whoever it was on the other end of the line. I have no idea what they were talking about, but she was definitely pressing for a decision. She said, "Make up your feeble mind!" After a short pause she said, "Well, decide one way or the other. I don't need to stand here wasting 35 cents a minute waiting on you to decide what you are going to do!" It reminded me that arguments can be expensive. This lady was ready to settle the issue because she realized that the argument in which she was engaged was going to cost her 35 cents every minute.

I suppose it would be helpful for many of us if we could actually put our arguments on a spreadsheet so we could see how much they were costing us. When nations argue it is sometimes called war. When the disagreement is finally settled, the countries will tally their losses in men, machines, and money. For anyone who has ever visited The Wall in Washington and



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

walked along looking at over 50,000 names, each of whom died in the war, you begin to recognize that arguments can certainly be costly.

This probably will come as a surprise to most of you, but even church people have been known to fuss and argue. I have even known of religious folks who have lost their religion over a church disagreement. Sometimes the disagreement has to do with the pastor. Other times, the pastor has to serve as a referee. With just a casual understanding of the New Testament letters a person would quickly know that there were some churches, especially the one at Corinth, that apparently were known for their argumentative spirit.

So, is that the way we are supposed to be? What are we supposed to do when we disagree? From the insights of the Apostle Paul, let me offer a few issues to consider about church arguments:

• **Care.** Be careful when you start arguing and fussing because, as the people of God, you represent the Lord to a world that does not know him. That's why the Scriptures instruct us not to be carrying our disagreements before the judges and magistrates of this world, because when we get there we start acting ungodly before an ungodly world. Occasionally, a church will have a disagreement that is played out, one side against the

other, in the media. When that happens, the only thing positive that can be seen is in the sale of newspapers and a larger audience watching the news. It is not just a matter of us hanging out our dirty laundry before the world — it is a matter of us discrediting the Lord in front of them.

• **Cost.** While the lady had figured up that her argument was costing 35 cents a minute, and while a nation may be able to add up the losses of men and dollars, it is almost impossible to calculate the eternal impact from a church fight. I have known of people who have dropped out of church because of a church disagreement, but that doesn't begin to tell the whole story. How do you calculate the loss of a testimony in a community, to your family members, to your children, or to your grandchildren? Potentially, generations down the line and long after a person is gone, there will be spiritual casualties of a church war.

One thing I do know for sure and that is in a church fight there are no winners, only losers, and in the end everyone loses. It is somewhat like wrestling a pig in a mud hole — even if you come out on top, both of you will be muddy.

• **Christ.** Yes, just that plain and simple — Jesus Christ! When you have a disagreement and when you want to raise the stakes in an argument, think about Christ. I know of very few situations in life that the

thought of "WWJD" would not help improve things. What would happen if we latched onto and would not let go of focusing on Jesus in every circumstance? It would make a difference in a home, with a husband and wife, or in relationships with kids. It surely would keep things in right order if a church was having problems with the pastor or building a new sanctuary.

• **Considerate.** Finally, there is one last thing that I want you to consider. I just want you to consider being considerate. In 1 Cor. the Apostle Paul deals with the big controversy of spiritual gifts by asking the church to consider that some of their differences are natural, God-designed, God-directed differences. The folks at Corinth were a lot like us in that oftentimes we grumble and fuss about differences when in fact we ought to be celebrating them. Let me explain. Paul says, "Look at the church. It is the body of Christ." Like a body, there are differences. A hand is not like a foot. A foot is not like an ear. An ear is not like an eye, and so on. Ears can't see and eyes can't hear. Hands have a difficult time walking, and that is good.

There are times when church members complain because their pastor can't preach like they think he ought to, or at least like they heard someone else preach. That may not be his significant spiritual gift. There are times when pastors complain about their members not serving effectively or producing in a meaningful way when it may be that that is not where they fit and function.

We are a body and as such we ought to get where we ought to be and do our best so that the body will move harmoniously and not need to fuss and argue!

First person: Bus trip builds relationships

By Polly House
LifeWay Christian Resources

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — When city slickers from the East headed out for the Wild West 150 years ago, they hitched up their wagons, loaded their trunks with a few cherished belongings, took sacks of corn meal and salt, and carried the treasured family Bible.

When 99 people from Crieveewood Church in Nashville headed west to Glorieta, a LifeWay Conference Center, the trip was much easier.

We hitched up our air-conditioned buses (equipped with video players and a restroom), loaded our rolling suitcases with lots of cherished belongings, took our homemade chocolate chip cookies and bottled water and, like our 19th-century counterparts, carried our treasured Bibles.

The adults and children would attend Sunday School Leadership Week at the New Mexico conference center, while the youth would do Centrifuge camp.

So, my 13-year old son Tyler, 11-year-old son Travis and 11-year old nephew Matthew from St. Louis and I packed our bags and were off with the group. My husband, Sam, who is editor-in-chief of LifeWay's HomeLife magazine, would meet us at Glorieta later.

Since reporting on Sunday School is one of my responsibilities as corporate communications specialist at LifeWay, I attend a lot of Sunday School-related events. So, going to Glorieta (which I would have done anyway) with friends from my own church on a 2,600-mile bus trip sounded fun.

By mutual agreement the adults and children loaded onto one bus, while the youth and youth leaders filled the other.

As our group pulled away at 7 a.m., spouses, parents, and siblings who were left behind waved goodbye. (Hmmm, while some parents were teary-eyed, some were smiling way too big.)

Since we would be trusting our lives to the driving skills of our bus driver, Marla Forrest, for the next nine days, it was good to know she was a friend and fellow Crieveewood member.

The first day the youth bus was mostly the "sleeping bus," while our adult/children bus was buzzing with activities, ranging from bus ride bingo to movies on video.

Our minister of education/cruise director Martha Minardi had prizes for everything. You bingo, you'd win a prize. You share a little known fact about yourself; you'd get a prize.

Marla seemed glad when Libby Eaton announced with that mom look, "A clean bus is a happy bus" and hung a trash bag on an empty seat to collect gum wrappers, candy papers, water bottles, and the like. The kids actually kept their trash picked up and in the bag.

After two long days on the road, and one night in a hotel in Shawnee, Okla., the Crieveewood group arrived at Glorieta.

We gave a collective cheer when we saw the first glimpse of the Holcomb Auditorium steeple from Interstate 40. I think it was mostly because we were really glad to be at Glorieta, not just that we were very glad to be getting off the bus.

New Mexico had experienced disastrous wildfires in May and June. Glorieta had offered shelter and food at no charge to people who had to flee their homes in the anticipated approach of the fires. When we were on campus, firemen were still staying there, "on call," in case lightning started more fires in the area.

God blessed the area with about three inches of rain during the week. One evening, not long before sundown, a heavy rain came through the area, leaving in its wake a glorious rainbow. A complete ground-to-ground arch. God's promise. It seemed appropriate.

Mike Boyd, pastor of Wallace Memorial Church in Knoxville, was our pastor for the week, and his sermons were outstanding. He had a great sense of humor and told lots of stories on himself.

As our week at the conference center was almost over, I realized I hadn't been in the prayer garden yet. It is the most beautiful area of the entire campus. I walked through there twice — once with a group of the older children who enjoyed the water trickling from the fountain down the rocks into the pool. The sound of their

laughter as they walked barefoot in the water was a delight. Then later, I made another trip back with a couple of friends.

Melissa Lanz, our church media librarian, said that as good as the conferences had been, what she had enjoyed most was the time to just get away and to get to know everyone so much better.

Maybe that's what the people who established Glorieta and Ridgecrest were thinking when the idea for conference centers was born.

As the bus was nearing Nashville and the trip was almost over, one church member using the bus public address system told the group, "It's so true that with any trip like this, there are so many things that come up, so many frustrations, but looking back, they don't really seem that important. What is important are the relationships we've formed and what God has taught us this week. He's worked in our lives."



GLORIETA TRIP — Cassie Elder (left) and Shelby Cotton, members of Crieveewood Church, Nashville, have wonderful memories of the bus caravan and the week they spent at Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

SBC, state leaders launch cooperation task force

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A Task Force on Cooperation was approved unanimously by the presidents of Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) entities and executive directors of state Baptist conventions statement at the conclusion of a July 26 meeting in Nashville.

The meeting was moderated by Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC executive committee, and Wyndell O. Jones, president of the Association of State Baptist Executive Directors.

The meeting was conducted according to press background rules, meaning that no one would be quoted directly and individual attribution would not be given. It was also decided that only Chapman and Jones, executive director of the Baptist Convention of Iowa, would issue statements to the news media. The statement noted that the meeting was held at the invitation of Chapman and Jones.

The eight-member task force, according to the motion made for its formation, will "be initiated for on-going dialogue

between the presidents of SBC entities and executive directors of the state Baptist conventions," the statement by Chapman and Jones reported.

"This dialogue will include, but not be limited to: the future of cooperation; the Cooperative Program; strategies that will cultivate and strengthen cooperative relations and assist in engaging a new generation of Southern Baptists in cooperation," the motion stated.

The motion was made by John Sullivan, executive director of the Florida Baptist Convention, the Chapman-Jones statement reported.

Four representatives of the SBC entities on the Task Force on Cooperation will be the president of the International Mission Board; the president of the North American Mission Board; the chairman of the Council of Seminary Presidents; and the president and chief executive officer of the executive committee.

Representing the Association of State Baptist

Executive Directors will be its president and three executive directors to be appointed by the association's president.

Jones said July 31 he is appointing to the task force Carlisle Driggers of the South Carolina Baptist Convention; Robert White of the Baptist Convention of the State of Georgia; and Anthony Jordan of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

The motion named Chapman, as executive committee president, as chairman of the Task Force on Cooperation.

"It was decided the Task Force would report to a combined meeting of the state Baptist executive directors and SBC entity presidents in February 2001," the statement by Chapman and Jones noted.

The reason for the meeting, Chapman said, was "to provide both groups an open forum to discuss present and future needs in Southern Baptist life."

"It is the sincere desire on the part of the executive directors to build trust and to work

together in promoting the Cooperative Program through the Convention." The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified channel for supporting missions and ministry in the state conventions and worldwide.

"The state conventions wish to work in partnership to build the Kingdom of God," Jones said, "and be the missionary force God wants us to be."

The statement noted, "Each state convention and the SBC are autonomous bodies that historically have worked together through partnerships to assist Southern Baptist churches throughout the U.S. in evangelism, missions, and ministries."

Said Chapman, "Because Southern Baptist polity is not hierarchical, but autonomous, keeping lines of communication open between the SBC and the state conventions is vital to our work. If we hope for Southern Baptists to remain faithful in fulfilling the Great Commission, we must talk and work together as genuine partner."



First Church, Olive Branch, recently held a recognition service for the following college students who have surrendered to full time Christian service. Pictured (from left, front row) are Bobby McGraw, college minister; Amanda Murphy; Brandon Dycus; Nick Hays; Andy Taylor; P. J. Scott, pastor; (back row) Sarah Drumm; Rachel Potts; Joey Katz; and Clint DeGroff.

The sixth annual Time Out for Women conference is planned for Aug. 11-12 at First Church, Holly Springs. This year's theme is Under His Wings. The conference begins on Friday at 6 p.m. and concludes at noon on Saturday with a luncheon and style show. Registration fee is \$20. Workshops include: Practicing Patience & Perseverance in a Microwave Age by Angelia Lindsey of Holly Springs; Creative Decorating by Bea Green of Holly Springs and Rollie Carson of Memphis, Tenn.; Taking Care of the Caregivers by Gail Houlk of Holly Springs; Holy Nudges by DiAnne Skillman of Mt. Pleasant; Limits of Love by Nancy Bramlett (wife of John

'Bull' Bramlett) Cordova, Tenn.; Singing Though Singed & Soggy by Johnnie Haines of Southaven; Never, Never Give Up On God by Nancy Bryant of Lakeland; Letting My Gratitude Be My Attitude by Shirley Berry (MRS Senior Mississippi) of Water Valley; Moms...On the Move, by Amy Barron (director of Women's Ministry at Kirby Woods Church, Memphis, Tenn.; and Reflecting God's Joy as you journey through life by Anna Teel of Mt. Pleasant. For more information contact the church at P. O. Box 428, Holly Springs, MS 38635 or call (662) 252-2627.



Members of Navilla Church, McComb

Navilla Church, McComb, recently recognized members with perfect attendance in Sunday School. Pictured (front row) are Scott Mercier, one year; (second row) Linda

Peoples, six years; Casey Dickerson, two years; Courtney Slaughter, one year; Paige Dickerson, two years; Lisa Freeman, one year; (back row) Amanda Peoples, 18 years;

Darwin Peoples, six years; Lee Peoples, 11 years; Alvin Dickerson, two years; Ralph Coon, one year; and Ron West, pastor. Jewell Deer is director of Sunday School.



The "Over 55" crowd attended a supper cooked in their honor by the mission team at Trinity Church, Monroe County. (Pictured, from left) are Anthony Minor, Peggy Minor, Lloyd Minor, Harry Stuart, Bonna Stuart, Willie Christian, Jack Cantrell, Betty Cantrell, Allie Edwards, Bobby Reeves, Opal Helms, Louise Dooley, Ralph Reeves, Ruth Camp, Donna Myatt, and Nancy and Fred Blalock.

Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, and First Church, Clinton, will sponsor a citywide inner-church garage sale on Sept. 1-2 to support the salary for the recruiting ministry of the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary. The recruiting ministry is at the heart of the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists vision to reach Canada for Christ. For more information, call Judy Williams at (601) 924-5283, or Sandra and Ben Nash at (601) 924-9205.



RAs of First Church, Chicora, recently held a car wash at the church and raised \$300 for a lay missionary. David Roberson is pastor.

Michael's Watch



But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." - Jude 1:9

Michael's Watch is a support group whose sole purpose and mission is to offer emotional, mental, and spiritual support for those whose lives have been affected by family members or loved ones involved in the homosexual lifestyle.

Michael's Watch Group meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday each month at First Baptist Church in Louisville, Mississippi from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Additional information may be obtained by calling **First Baptist Church in Louisville, Mississippi** at (662) 773-6246.

Worship Alive and Creative



A conference for all worship leaders August 18, 2000

Baptist Building, Jackson

9 a.m. - 4 p.m. (registration 8:30 a.m.)



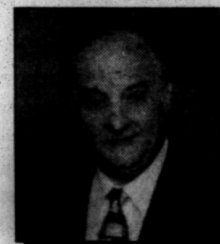
Argile Smith

Chairman of the Division of Pastoral Ministries and associate professor of preaching at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Sponsored by:

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer



Ev Robertson

Director of drama at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tennessee, and drama specialist at LifeWay Christian Ministries

"Helping to Bring the World and Mississippi to Jesus"

State Worship Conference Registration Form

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Church _____ Phone _____
Position _____

Registration Fee: \$10 (includes conference fee and lunch)

Make check payable to: **Mississippi Baptist Convention Board**

Mail check and registration form by **August 16** to: **Church Music Department, Worship Conference**
PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

Custom Church Interiors, Inc.

PEWS

Pew Refinishing & Reupholstering
Stain Glass • Carpet • Lights
Painting • Baptisries • Steeples
Complete Renovations

1-800-654-1294

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

August 10, 2000

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

ARW Literacy Workshop

Adult Reading and Writing/NAMB Certification

September 14-16 Instructor: Juanita Schilling

Place: Pearl River Baptist Association Camp (601)798-2372

Cost: \$45 includes meals and registration fee.

Registration deadline: September 7

You must complete all class times to receive ARW certification from NAMB.

Thursday 6-10 pm Friday 6-10 pm Saturday 8 am-5 pm

Contact the WMU for more info: 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800

CE/ESL Workshop

Conversational English and English as a Second Language

NAMB Certification

September 14-16 Instructor: Gwen Allen

Place: Pontotoc Association (662)489-1251

Cost: \$25 includes materials and lunch on Saturday.

Registration deadline: September 7

You must complete all class times to receive CE/ESL certification from NAMB.

Thursday 6-10 pm Friday 6-10 pm Saturday 8 am-5 pm

Contact the WMU for more info: 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800

PLANNING PROCESS for the

NEW CHURCH YEAR 2000 - 2001

brochure available

- The Pastor as Leader
- The Church Leadership Team (Church Council)
- Gather Resources to Aid in Planning
- Write or Review Church Mission Statement
- Study the Church and Community Needs
- Select a Few Priorities
- Set Challenging Goals
- Develop Action Plans to Accomplish Your Priorities
- Develop a Correlated Church Calendar
- Build Your Church Budget
- Present Plans, Calendar, and Budget to Church for Adoption
- Meet Regularly to Review
- Celebrate the Victories



Contact the **Church Administration - Pastoral Ministries Department**
for copies at 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800

Women's Prayer Celebration Retreat

"Beyond Belief"

Speaker: Chris Adams

Musicians: Donna Lundell and Pam Weigle

Missionary Emphasis: Paula Smith

September 29-30

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

Pass Christian

Seminars:

- *Gifts from the Heart* - Deboria Watts
- *Transformed Lives: Taking Women's Ministry to the Next Level* - Chris Adams
- *Sisters Who Care* - Debora Joiner
- *Launching Language Ministries* - Paula Smith
- Plus many more led by the Women of the State Visionary Team

Contact the WMU
for more info: 1-800-748-1651
or in Jackson, 968-3800

Women Reaching

Women Retreat

Central Hills
Baptist Retreat
October 20-21

Emphasis: "Make Known the Mystery
throughout Mississippi"

Break out session choices:

- **Titus 2 Women** - the great Mentoring Match-up
- **HeartCall** - Women sharing God's Heart (Bring a woman with you that needs Jesus and/or bring the one who knows Jesus because you led her to the Lord.)
- **The Virtuous Woman** - bring collegiate and young women with you!
- **Mission Opportunities in Mississippi** - all kinds of ways to be involved locally and globally
- **The Financially Confident Woman** - great \$\$\$\$ helps!
- **My Prayer Life** - practical information from a practicing prayer warrior

COST: \$40 (lodging, 3 meals and registration)

Deadline to register: October 13

Contact the WMU for more info: 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson, 968-3800

Wynndale Baptist
Church, Terry
August 13, 2000
6 p.m.

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Guest Conductor
Bruce Zeiger
Whitesburg Baptist Church
Huntsville, Alabama

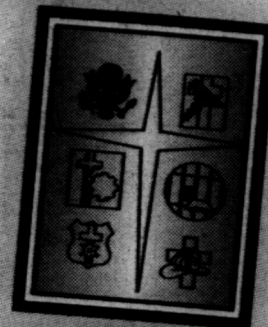
Contact Jim Lott, instrumental consultant, in the
Church Music Department for more information,
1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800.

VOLUNTEER CHAPLAINS TRAINING FOR EFFECTIVE MINISTRY IN...

Corrections, Health Care and Critical Incident Stress Management

September 15, 2000 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Building
515 Mississippi Street, Jackson



TRAINING SESSIONS AND LEADERS

Corrections: John Henry and Charles Jones

An introduction to Volunteer Ministry to those incarcerated in city, county and state correctional facilities.

Health Care: David Millican, Gary Strehlow, Dexter Ware

Training for ministers and laypersons who visit in hospitals, nursing homes, and hospice programs.

Critical Incident Stress Management: Drew Blanton and Jimmie Garrard

An introduction for pastoral care-givers in helping emergency personnel deal with stress in response to "critical incident" situations.

Participant will select one of the focus areas and attend a total of five hours training in that area.
This training open to all ministers and laypersons who wish to improve their ministry skills in one of these areas.

REGISTRATION FORM: VOLUNTEER CHAPLAINS TRAINING FOR EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

September 15, 2000

Registration fee of \$5 per person enclosed (includes lunch and materials) *

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Please register by September 5, 2000

Mail to: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Don Q. Wilson, Chaplaincy, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

For more information, call Don Q. Wilson, 1-800-748-1651 or Reid Whittington, 1-601-481-1209.

Sponsored by

Strategic Initiative Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and
Mississippi Baptist Chaplains Association

September Sunday School Training

The Power to Change
The Power of Spiritual Transformation

September 8 and 9
First Baptist Church, Batesville
September 8 and 9
Gulfshore Baptist Assembly
Pass Christian
September 15 and 16
First Baptist Church, Madison

A detailed listing of faculty and
conferences may be found at our
web site: www.mbcab.org/ss.

Contact the Sunday School Department for more info:
1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson, 601-968-3800



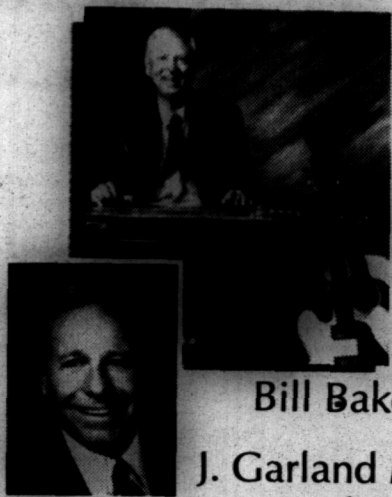
BIBLE Drill Clinics

Children and Youth Bible Drill leaders, judges
and callers training

Six locations in Mississippi
September 11, 12 and 14, 2000
led by Don Hicks and Harvey Ellis
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board consultants

Time	Location	Leader
7 - 9 pm, Monday, September 11	McNeil, Pearl River Associational Office	Don Hicks
7 - 9 pm, Monday, September 11	Greenville, Washington Associational Office	Harvey Ellis
7 - 9 pm, Tuesday, September 12	Jackson, Metro Associational Office	Don Hicks
7 - 9 pm, Tuesday, September 12	Tupelo, Lee Associational Office	Harvey Ellis
7 - 9 pm, Thursday, September 14	Meridian, Lauderdale Associational Office	Don Hicks
7 - 9 pm, Thursday, September 14	Columbus, Golden Triangle Associational Office	Harvey Ellis

If you have any questions or need more information about these clinics, please call Don Hicks or Harvey Ellis in the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at 1-800-748-1651 or E-mail Don at dhicks@mbcb.org or Harvey at hgeilis@mbcb.org



2000 Regional Senior Adult Rallies

(8:30-11:30 A.M.)
Cost - \$1.00

Bill Baker
J. Garland McKee

Dream Team	August 28 FBC, Sardis	August 29 FBC, Madison	August 31 FBC, Laurel
Choir/Group	"Joymakers" FBC, Clinton	"Rugger-Roos" Hillbilly Band Raymond	"Reflections" FBC, Jackson
Piano	June McKee	June McKee	Irene Martin
Speaker	J. Garland McKee Clinton	J. Garland McKee Clinton	Bill Baker Clinton
Conferences:			
• Fun Time	J. Garland McKee	J. Garland McKee	Bill Baker
• Jesus By Heart	John McCall Clinton	John McCall Clinton	Ken H. Hopkins Hattiesburg
• Leadership	LifeWay	LifeWay	Horace Kerr Brandon

Pike Association Discipleship Rally

Gene Wilkes

Monday, September 25, 6:30 p.m.
Silver Creek Baptist Church, McComb



Sponsored by the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, MBCB

AGELESS MOTHER/DAUGHTER OVERNIGHT

"NEVER the Same"

October 13-14, Camp Garaywa

Any daughter ages 5 - 105+ and their mother are invited.
(Grandmothers, Mothers, Daughters, Sisters, Granddaughters)
Cost: \$27.50 per person
All overnights begin at 5 pm Friday and conclude at 2 pm Saturday

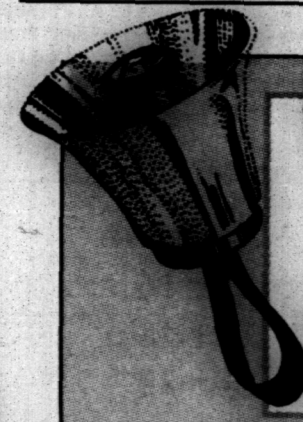
Registration Form - Deadline September 29

Parent's Name _____
Daughter's Name/Age _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone number _____ (H) _____ (W) _____
Church Name _____ Association _____
Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone _____
Number attending _____ x \$27.50 = \$ _____ (total enclosed)
Make checks payable to: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB)
Mail to: WMU, Ageless Mother/Daughter Overnight, PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

"POPS" and ME Day

PARENTS of PRESCHOOLERS and ME
Age 3 (by Sept. 1, 2000) through Pre-First
September 16 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Camp Garaywa
Cost: \$5 (includes lunch)
Bring your parents, teachers, caregivers and come join us
for crafts, music and time with a missionary!

Deadline to register is September 1
For info call: Debbie Sills (601)292-3320 in Jackson
or 1-800-748-1651



Teaching Handbell Skills for Ringers

August 26 8:30 am - 1:30 pm
Trace Ridge BC, Ridgeland

Contact the Church Music Department for more info:
1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson 968-3800



Missions Explosion "It's Out of This World"

Church-wide missions celebration

August 25-26 at Camp Garaywa

Missions Explosion Registration

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Association: _____ Church: _____
No. Registering: _____ Housing Choice: _____ Total Cost: \$ _____
Roomates (if applicable): _____
Meals Only (list meals): _____ Amt. Enclosed: \$ _____
Return to: State WMU Office, PO Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 by August 18
Patterson Place Lodge **Guest House** **Meals Only**
(includes 3 meals) (includes 3 meals) Breakfast: \$4.50
Double: \$46.50 each \$28.50 each Lunch: \$5.50
Triple: \$41.50 each Dinner \$6.50
Quad: \$36.50 each

For info: Contact Tammy Anderson, WMU, 1-800-748-1651 or 1-601-292-3323

Pray this day for...

August 11-24, 2000

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

"TO PRAY IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST is to recognize that we have no claims on God whatever, that God owes us nothing whatever, that we deserve nothing of God, but believing that God Himself tells us about Jesus Christ's claim upon Him, we ask God for things on grounds of Jesus Christ's Claim upon God."

Language Missions Day, ISC workers Sam and Ginny Cannata escaped injury recently as they drove from Kakama to Lodwar, Kenya. Armed gunmen fired into their vehicle, but God protected them. Continue to remember all our missionaries who serve and drive in dangerous areas.

Juan Kovalchuk is a church planting missionary in the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-S. Jersey. Pray for him as one of his duties is to be a peacemaker among the people in different congregations. Pray for two new Hispanic works which are in Reading and York.

For (1) Sunday School Director Seminar, Greenville (2) A young monk in Myanmar is searching for meaning in his life and "something" to help him overcome his lack of purpose. Pray that his search will lead him to the One who brings abundant life.

Housing in the Paris area is scarce. Ask the Lord to lead Baptist representatives serving there to housing that is affordable, is large enough to meet needs, provides a ministry opportunity, and has good transportation access.

For (1) Certification and SkillShops for Ministry Assistants, Camp Garaywa (2) A team in Vietnam is developing relationships this summer to help start a new group. Pray that they will be able to help grow and multiply that group so that it can eventually become a church.

Pray that the Christians in Egypt will experience personally the salvation of Christ. Pray that they will move beyond carrying the "name" Christian to carrying Christ in their hearts and lives. Pray for boldness in witness and for protection for those who share the good news.

The 305,000 Wayuu people in Colombia who live in the desert peninsula called the Guajira are about to receive the New Testament in their language, and therefore, the "Jesus" film in Wayuunaiki. Pray for the translator who is searching for the appropriate words to reach the hearts of his people.

Maria, a Christian, is so poor that her family must "squat" on land that is not theirs and live in a makeshift house. Her husband says he is a Christian, but beats her constantly. Pray for missionary Gabbie Worley, serving in Guatemala City, who is discipling Maria and counseling her in her marriage problems.

R.A. Torrey

For (1) Sunday School Director Seminar, Brookhaven (2) Pray for the many students who will attend camps, classes, and other activities this summer where they will have first-hand encounters with Christians who model and share the Good News of Christ.

Missionaries write: "We want to thank each of you who joined us to pray for Zimbabwe before and during their parliamentary elections on June 24-25. The people turned out to vote in record numbers and peace has prevailed to this point. Thank you for praying for God's hand to be upon Zimbabwe."

For (1) II Growing Churches; Gulfshore Assembly (2) Don Almond is a state church planting program director for the Missouri Baptist Convention, Jefferson City, Mo. Pray for the bivocational work in the state and for Don as he looks for ways to provide consultant training for their bivocational pastors.

For (1) Worship Seminar, Baptist Building (2) A qualified candidate has initiated contact for the hospital administrator position with the Health Care Team at Baptist Medical Center in Nalerigu, Ghana. Pray for guidance for him and for the team, to know if he is the man God has chosen.

For (1) Area Preschool/Children's Choir Leadership; FBC, Batesville/Temple BC, Hattiesburg (2) A radio broadcast in the local language of Deccani, India, has met with a number of favorable responses. Lift up those listening that they would have ears to hear and hearts to respond to God's Spirit.

For (1) Area Preschool/Children's Choir Leadership; Brandon (2) Continue to pray for rain in Eastern Africa, as so many lives depend upon adequate rainfall. Pray that God will use the lack of rain to cause many to look to Him and recognize their need of Him.

Outreach Strategy Tour in a New Century

FBC, Vancleave
October 16
FBC, Lucedale
October 23

The Outreach Strategy Tour is a conference designed to help your church decide and plan an outreach program tailored to the needs of your congregation. The morning session, from 9 a.m. to noon, is specifically designed for pastors and key leaders to discuss some basic elements of forming an outreach strategy, and begin designing a strategy for the local church. That evening, from 7-9 p.m. all the Sunday School leadership will be involved in learning more about how to reach their age group for Christ. In addition, consultants will be available by appointment throughout the afternoon to discuss any specific needs in your ministry area.

Registration Form Outreach Strategy Tour

Church Name _____
Church Phone _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Contact person _____
Location: ☐ Vancleave ☐ Lucedale

Demographics Requested by (choose one only)

Zip code (please specify) _____
Mile radius from church _____
North/South/East/West Boundaries (name streets/highways) _____

Mail to:

Sunday School Department, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205-0530
Phone 1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 in Jackson
E-mail: ss@mbcb.org Register online: www.mbcb.org/ss



Whatever
It Takes...

COST OPTIONS:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------|
| A. Cabins | |
| (bring linens) | \$24.50 |
| B. Guest House | |
| (linens included) | \$28.50 |
| C. Per Meal | |
| (no overnight stay) | \$5.00 |

NURSES ON MISSION

September 22-23, 2000
Camp Garaywa, Clinton, Miss.

Registration begins at 4:00 p.m., Friday., Sept. 22
The last session concludes at 4:00 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 23

PROGRAM LEADERS

Sam Gore, master sculptor
Miss. College, Clinton
Becky Brown, music evangelist
New Orleans, La.
Diane P. Smith, missionary artist
Cote d'Ivoire
West Africa
Kay Jones, nurse, Selma, Ala.
Carol Welch, Madison
Gloria Thurman, missionary

BNF REGISTRATION FORM

2000 BNF FALL RETREAT — CAMP GARAYWA — SEPT. 22-23, 2000

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE (WORK) _____ (HOME) _____

DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 15, 2000

Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ person(s)
Cost Option (check one) A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐
Make checks payable to: WMU, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Forty-five junior high students and nine adult sponsors from First Church, Jackson, recently experienced missions first hand on the Promise Choir Tour to St. Louis, Mo. While there, the group worked with inner city children, organized a food and clothing distribution center, and sang concerts in local churches and tourist sites. The

group is directed by Andy Swanner, associate music and worship pastor.

First Church, Terry, had five children that scored superior during the recent State Bible Drill. Participants were (from left, front row) Morgan Jenkins, daughter of Allen and Laura Jenkins; Blaire Jones, daughter of Steve and Valerie Jones;

Jonathan Pace, son of John and Dawn Pace; (back row) Sarah Little, daughter of Steve and Colleen Little; and Bart Brunson, son of Barry and Ellen Brunson. They also scored superior at the Church Bible Drill and Metro Bible Drill. The Bible Drill leaders were Dawn Pace (pictured) and Beverly Ivers (not pictured).

A crew of 12 men and women spent six days working on Bay View Church, Homer, Alaska. The new church will be ready for services soon. From Homer, the crew went to Anchorage and worked on the Alaska Baptist State Office Building, giving it an inside paint job and some new lighting improvements. The crew was Ira Alley, pastor of Macedonia Church, Pittsboro, and his wife Memorie; Martha Rodgers, Calhoun City; Lenon White, Calhoun City; Bobbie and Larry Pritchard, Clarksdale; Mike May and



Bible Drill participants from First Church, Terry

Marjorie Chrestman, both of Tupelo; Nina Carroll, Hattiesburg; Fay Carlisle, Becker; Herbert Carroll, Plantersville; and Janet Carroll, New Orleans, La.



Promise Choir of First Church, Jackson



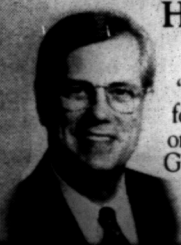
Mission team in Homer, Alaska

HOW DO YOU GROW A GREAT COMMISSION CHURCH?

GLOBAL FOCUS LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Jackson, Mississippi ~ September 6-8, 2000

Hosted by Crossgates Baptist Church, Brandon, Mississippi



Dr. L. R. Landon, President,
International Mission Board

"Pastors will gain new vision for reaching our world and being on mission with God through the Global Focus Leadership Seminar."

"We are excited about all that God is doing through Global Focus in many of our Southern Baptist churches to help us be on mission with God, both at home and abroad."



Dr. Robert E. "Bob" Reesor, President,
North American Mission Board

CONDUCTED BY:



For more information, contact Global Focus at 770.592.7011 ext. 209 or via e-mail at LandonReesor@msn.com

IN COOPERATION WITH:
International Mission Board
SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION



NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD, SBC
NAMB

Time to renew your church insurance?

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Last year, 12,000 churches took advantage of the free on-site insurance needs analysis from Church Mutual — the company that protects more churches than any other. They compared their present policy with a Church Mutual proposal and quote. Why don't you? Even if you decide not to accept, you get a valuable, objective analysis of your insurance needs. Simply fill out and send us this ad, call us at 1-800-554-2642 or visit our Web site at www.churchmutual.com/needs/

NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

CHURCH NAME: _____

PHONE: () _____ BEST TIME TO CALL: _____

Send to:
Church Mutual Insurance Company
3000 Schuster Lane, P.O. Box 357
Merrill, WI 54452



Mississippians graduate seminaries nationwide

Columbia

The doctorate of ministry degree was conferred upon Lowell D. Ingram during May commencement exercises of the Columbia Theological Seminary, Atlanta, Ga. He currently serves as pastor of Cato Church, Rankin Association.

Golden Gate

Stephanie Hill received a master of arts in intercultural ministries from Golden Gate Seminary. She is the daughter of David and Janice Hill of Bethany Church, Potts Camp.

Mid-America

Students with Mississippi connections were among the graduates of Mid-America Seminary, Germantown, Tenn., on May 12.

Those receiving master of divinity degrees were Charles Donald Baggett, II, pastor of Cowart Church, Charleston; Christopher David O'Daniel, youth minister of Church Road Church, Nesbit; and Michael Anthony Parrish, member of Meadow View Church, Starkville.

Receiving associate of divinity degrees were Randy Allen Mauney, pastor of Calvary Church, Ashland; and K. Brian Rainey of Tupelo, pastor of First Church, Michie, Tenn.

Midwestern

One student with ties to Mississippi was among the graduates receiving degrees from Midwestern Seminary May 20. Receiving the master of divinity degree was Kraig A. Smith of Cleveland, formerly of Immanuel Church of Cleveland. Smith currently serves as minister of youth at Lexington Park Church in Maryland.

New Orleans

Three students with Mississippi connections received doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) during commencement exercises on May 19.

The graduates, pictured (at left) with NOBTS President Charles S. Kelley Jr., are Brion Keith Dowden, pastor of Holly Church, Corinth, doctor of ministry degree in pastoral studies;

David Jeffreys, minister of education and youth of First Church, Magnolia, doctor of philosophy degree in Christian education; and Michael Ray Priest from Corinth, doctor of philosophy degree in New Testament and Greek.

Receiving master of divinity degrees were Joe Beeson Jr. of Brookhaven; Clayton Bennett Carver Jr. of Runnelstown; R. Israel Cox, associate pastor of pastoral ministries at First Church, Gulfport; Marvin Gregory Gavin of Laurel, pastor of Pine Grove Church, Ellisville; Breck Theophilus Ladd of Monticello, pastor of Oak Hills Church, Poplarville; James Charles Moore of Canton; Richard Earl Murray Jr., youth minister of Woodville Church, Woodville; Bradley M. Rushing of Tylertown; Christopher Todd Sullens, youth pastor of Bethel Church, Monticello.

Receiving the master of arts degrees were Kaysha Little Clark of Picayune; Alexander Roe "Alex" Craft of Picayune, associate pastor/minister of music of First Church, Eupora; and Joy L. Sumrall of Picayune.

Receiving the bachelor of arts degree were Anthony "Brett" Campbell of Runnelstown; youth minister and associate pastor of First Church, Runnelstown; Edward M. "Mickey" Little of Jackson; Freddie Martin Matthews, pas-

tor of Cruger Church, Cruger; Jesse W. Owen of Braxton.

Maria Lelane Broadwater of Cleveland, Sunday School teacher of First International Church in Gulfport; and Coleman "Clinton" Nichols, youth minister at Pineview Church, Hattiesburg, received the bachelor of general studies degree.

Southern

Southern Seminary graduates in May were Jeanne Bennett Nation of Duck Hill, master of arts in Christian education; and Clay Anthony of New Albany, master of divinity.

Southeastern

The following graduates from Mississippi were conferred a degree by Southeastern Seminary on May 20. They were George A. Stockman, Vancleave, bachelor of arts in Biblical studies; and Alan C. McCullough of Jackson, master of divinity.

Southwestern

Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, held its spring commencement on May 12. Graduates from Mississippi included Emily Cain of Louisville; Angela Fortenberry; Jason Golden of Southaven; Mark Jones of Clinton; Justin Peters of Vicksburg; Norman Robinson of Quitman; Julia Southerland of Columbus; Sheryl Vincent; James White; Sheryl Williams; and James Wright.



Dowden, Jeffreys, Kelley, and Priest

Homecomings

Concord (Choctaw): Aug. 13; 10:45 a.m.; Ralph Cain, speaker; covered dish lunch at noon; Roger Griffith, pastor.

Beacon, Hattiesburg: Aug. 13; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; followed by covered dish lunch; 1:30 p.m. singing; Cecil Hathorn, speaker; Jon Kittrell, music.

Cedar View, Olive Branch: Aug. 13; 37th anniversary; services, 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall with a concert by the Landmarks in the afternoon; Ed Schulker, former pastor, preaching.

South 28th Avenue, Hattiesburg: Aug. 13-16; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Cliff Estes, evangelist; Charles Walker, music; Leonard Walters, pastor.

Fellowship (Jones): Aug. 13-17; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch, discipleship training, 5 p.m., and worship, 6 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Eddie Bryant, Ellisville, evangelist; Robert Fennell, Ellisville, music; Hiram Eaves, pastor.

Leflore, Holcomb: Aug. 20-23; Harold Danley, Elaine, Ark., evangelist; Wilton Neal, music; Larry Livingston, pastor.

Concord (Choctaw): Aug. 14-18; 7 p.m.; T. A. (Buck) Duke, evangelist; Timmy Drane, music; Roger Griffith, pastor.

Horseshoe (Holmes): Aug. 18-20; services at 7 p.m. on Fri. and Sat.; 11 a.m. Sunday followed by covered dish meal; guest speakers are Richard Jennings, Albert Grey, and Roger Richardson; Mills Heard and Betty Ellege, music; Kerry Burroughs, pastor.

Ramah, McCall Creek: Aug. 13-18; Sunday, Sunday School at 10 a.m., worship, 11 a.m., lunch at noon and afternoon service; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; David Crowe, speaker; Rusty Bowlin, pastor.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FARMERVILLE, LOUISIANA is seeking a full-time minister of youth and a full-time minister of music. Please send resumes to Youth or Music Search Committee, P.O. Box 296, Farmerville, La 71241.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Nevada, Missouri, seeks full-time music minister. Send resumes to: Search Committee, 301 East Highland, Nevada, Missouri 64772.

ARLIS NICHOLS - CHRISTIAN HUMORIST. A ministry of encouragement and motivation. Now scheduling for Fall/Winter of 2000-2001. Phone 601-659-9991 or write to: 1142 County Road 375, Enterprise, MS 39330. E-mail: Arlis@Nichols.net. Website: www.ArlisNichols.net.

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

PART-TIME YOUTH MINISTER NEEDED. Send resume to: Providence Baptist Church, c/o Dicky Taylor, 301 Fayette Davis Avenue, Cleveland, MS 38732.

COLLEGE MINISTER NEEDED. Bi-vocational 25-30 hours/week. Please send resume to Morrison Heights Baptist Church, 201 Morrison Drive, Clinton, MS 39056 or fax to 601-924-5622, Attn: Jennifer.

BILOXI, MS., HAS OPENING for a bi-vocational pastor. Send resume to East Howard Baptist Church, Attn: Search Committee, 241 Howard Ave., Biloxi, MS 39530.

CHILDHOOD MINISTRIES DIRECTOR NEEDED. Please send resume to Morrison Heights Baptist Church, 201 Morrison Drive, Clinton 39056 or fax to 601-924-5622, Attn: Jennifer.



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DIRECTOR SOUGHT

Editor:

O. Wyndell Jones, executive director-treasurer of the Baptist Convention of Iowa, has announced his upcoming retirement. We are beginning the process to find God's man to lead our convention in the coming years. We ask for your prayers and for resumes of individuals that you feel led to recommend. Resumes should be received by Sept. 13, and sent to me at 534 Excelsior Lane, Waterloo, IA 50701.

David L. Newcom
Waterloo, Iowa

THANKS, MISS. BAPTISTS

Editor:

Thank you Southern Baptists of Mississippi for allowing me, the state winner in the Youth Speakers Tournament, to represent our state at Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina, during Family and Discipleship Week. The experience was incredible. I was given the opportunity to surround myself with people my own age, who were wise beyond their years. God revealed a lot to me during that week and I am thankful that I was given the opportunity to attend.

A special thank you to Harvey Ellis (consultant in the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board) for his support. An additional thanks for Mississippi College, where I will be attending in the fall, for providing a scholarship.

I hope that you will encourage young people to look into the Speakers Tournament. It has provided many things to me, including the people whom I have met. I hope the interest in the Speakers Tournament will continue to grow because it provides an exceptional place for youth to grow as Christians and share their faith.

Karen J. Howell
Brandon

JOIN IN PRAYER JOURNEY

Editor:

In the last four school years, forty-two students and teachers have been killed and eighty-three more have been wounded by fellow students on their school campuses. We are not helpless! We can do something! The North American Mission Board is partnering with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention to promote Campus Prayer Journey 2000. The date is Sept. 19 at 7 p.m. This is 12 hours before students across the nation participate in See You At The Pole. I believe it is possible to change our campuses with prayer.

The strategy is simple. Campus Prayer Journey is local churches mobilizing adults to pray for their students and the schools where they attend. Churches are being encouraged to pray for the safety, salvation, and spiritual growth of their children and teenagers this coming school year. The goal is to mobilize three percent of every local church's resident membership or 300,000 adults nationwide to pray a "hedge of protection" around every elementary, secondary, and collegiate campus in our country. This goal can only become reality one church at a time.

Last year, adults in twenty-seven states took part in this prayer event. If you would like information, please contact me at (800) 806-6940, ext. 5177 or email me at campusprayer@absc.org.

Randy Brantley
Ark. Baptist State Conv.
Little Rock, Ark.

TIME TO BE HEARD

Editor:

I serve on the county school board and believe without a doubt that our school board would vote to continue prayer before any event, athletic or academic. However, that is not our choice anymore (according

to the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling).

Now is the time for Christians to speak up, no matter where you attend a football game or any other sporting event (home or away). Immediately following the playing of the National Anthem, before anything else is said, I invite you to stand and unite in the saying of the Lord's Prayer. Don't wait for anyone to tell you; just start when the National Anthem is complete. If all in attendance will join in, what a message this will send!

I pray this will catch on and become common practice at every event and spread like the wind, beyond county and state lines. If this could happen at each and every school function, led by parents, the U.S. Supreme Court may realize that God's law is above man's law.

It is time the silent majority be heard.

Dwayne Reynolds
Chunky

THANKS FOR COVERAGE

Editor:

Thank you for the coverage you give to the Global Priority Church challenge of the International Mission Board (IMB).

This network of almost 700 churches seeks to prioritize the missions of Acts 1:8, and counts among the fellowship 33 Mississippi Baptist churches.

These churches are the First Churches of Biloxi, Calhoun City, Columbus, Gautier, Gulfport, Indianola, Jackson, Madison, Pascagoula, Richland, and Union, as well as Southside, Benoit; Crossgates and Crossview of Brandon; Easthaven of Brookhaven; Morrison Heights of Clinton; and Fairview and Mt. Zion, Columbus.

Also included are Harmontown, Como; Duck Hill, Escatawpa; Calvary, Jackson; Temple, Moss Point; Oakland, Broadway, and Immanuel of Olive Branch; New Prospect, Oxford; Paul Truett Memorial, Pearl; Union, Picayune; Faith Memorial, Poplarville; Sherman, Oak Grove, Smithdale; and Calvary,

Starkville.

We look forward to adding hundreds of others, including many more from Mississippi.

Those of us who are native Mississippians in the IMB family are always grateful to God for the increasingly strong missions commitment of "our folks."

Bill Morgan
International Mission Board
Richmond, Va.

STAND UP AGAINST HATE

Editor:

I am a former resident of Meridian and my wife is a native Mississippian. We love this state and its people — black and white.

When considering removing the Confederate symbol from the Mississippi flag, don't ask, "Was this flag originally meant as a symbol of racism?"

Ask, "Is this symbol used now by the KKK and other white supremacists to promote hate?"

Don't ask, "What do revisionist historians say the Civil War was about? Decency? Morality? States' or individual rights?"

Ask, "Did the Confederacy fight for the 'fatherless,' the 'widow,' and the 'alien?'"

Deut. 10:18 says God loves and defends the cause of the fatherless, the widow, and the alien.

Don't ask, "Is this flag a symbol of my heritage or culture?"

Ask, "Does putting my heritage, my culture, or myself before my neighbor honor Jesus Christ?"

Jesus said to love our neighbor as we love ourselves (Mark 12:30-31).

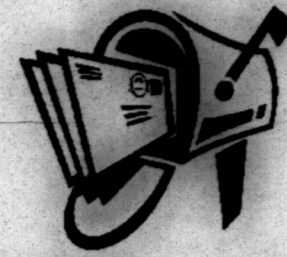
Who is your neighbor? Read Luke 10:29-37.

Mississippi Baptists have been nationwide leaders in racial reconciliation. Why not stand up, as Christians, against this symbol of hate?

The eyes of our nation and media would be on you. When they ask why you stood up, share the Gospel of Jesus.

Tell of his love for all people and tell of his gift of salvation that is free to all who believe.

Gary Myers
Kansas City



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

CITY-WIDE, INNER-CHURCH GARAGE SALE September 1 & 2

at Morrison Heights Baptist Church

Proceeds go to support the salary for the recruiting ministry of the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary. The recruiting ministry is at the heart of the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists vision to reach Canada for Christ.

Your donations are needed in order to have enough merchandise to sell for two days. Please contact the following individuals to arrange for pick up or drop off of donations; to support the ministry in prayer; assist in picking up donations; or work during the garage sale.

Morrison Heights
Baptist Church:

Randy Bower: 924-7082
Judy Williams: 924-5283

Broadmoor

Sue Dockery: 925-5333
Nancy Parker: 957-7963

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NAMES IN THE NEWS



New Bethlehem Church, Simpson County, honored 98-year-old Barney Thames as the oldest father present on Father's Day, 2000. Thames had four generations of his family present with him. Pete Pearson is pastor of New Bethlehem Church.

J. B. Betts, after 15 years of throat problems, is now available for revivals and concerts. "I feel God still has a ministry for me in sharing the gospel through singing and sharing," said Betts. He can be contacted at 154 Meadow Drive, Heber Springs, AR 72543 or call (501) 362-2332.

Arkansas, and the Mississippi Delta for 30 years. Five years ago he became pastor of Schlater Church, after retiring from Moorhead Church in 1995.

Curtis Corbin Hatcher, 49, minister of music and youth at Barton Church, Lucedale, died of cancer Sunday, July 23, at home. Services were held July 27 at Barton Church with burial in the church cemetery.

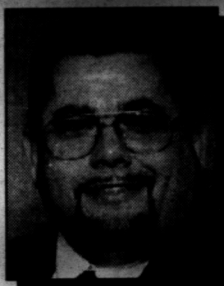
Hatcher, a native of Springfield, Ohio, received his education at Wittenberg University, Springfield, and Mississippi College.

He was a member of the Mississippi Singing Churchmen, where he served as secretary and was a past president.

Hatcher started his church ministry with youth at Northside Church, Springfield, in 1975.

He also served at Westview Church, Jackson; West Jackson Church, Jackson; Lakeshore Church, Jackson; First Church, Richland; West McComb Church, McComb; and Second Church, Greenville.

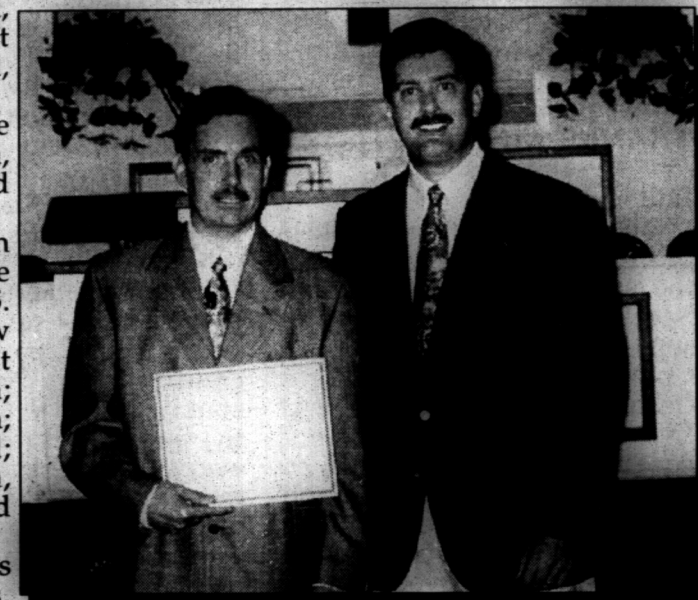
Survivors include his wife Mary Lou; daughters, Jamie Hatcher and Carrie



Anne Hatcher, both of Lucedale; mother, Elnora Weaver Hatcher of Springfield, Ohio, and one brother, Fred Hatcher.

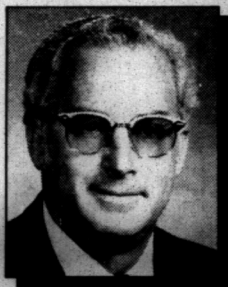
Memorials may be made to Chest of Joash Building Fund of Barton Baptist Church, 2220 Mississippi 63 South, Lucedale, MS 39452.

First Southern Church, Pearlington, licensed Kevin Schill for the ministry on June 4. Pictured are Schill and Mark Hayman, pastor.



Schill and Hayman

Wilbur Webb, pastor of Schlater Church, Schlater, was honored for 50 years in the ministry on July 30. Webb, a native of Rankin County, was presented a book of letters and a gold watch. In July of 1950 he surrendered his life to the ministry. He started preaching part-time at two churches, but since graduation from Southern Seminary in 1957 with a master's degree, he has pastored 11 churches in Kentucky,



Webb

Courses to be offered in Mississippi by NOBTS

August 21 begins the fifth of nine courses at eight locations in Mississippi sponsored by New Orleans Seminary, New Orleans (NOBTS).

The total eight courses are: Song Leading; Worship Planning; Reading Music; Rhythm/Pitch; Reading Music; Harmony/Melody; Hymnology; Music Administration/Staff Relations; Survey of Music Resources; Class Voice. These courses are designed to provide basic training for bivocational music directors and other music leaders in churches.

The eight courses meet two hours per week. Each course is eight weeks in length.

The cycle of courses is scheduled over a two-year period. Each course is independent and has no prerequisite. Each student who completes the eight courses earns a Church Music Certificate from New Orleans Seminary plus a credit of eight hours toward an on-campus degree program. There is a one-time registration fee of \$25. The cost of each course is \$75.

Scholarships are available for first-time students. Students already enrolled are not eligible. The grant is limited to one person per church.

The fifth course "Hymnology" will meet once a week for two hours for eight consecutive weeks at the following locations and times:

● First Church, Cleveland—beginning Aug. 21 (7-9 p.m.) Ian Richardson, teacher.

● Broadmoor Church, Jackson — beginning Aug. 21

(7-9 p.m.) Jimmy McCaleb, teacher.

● First Church, Columbus — beginning Aug. 21 (7-9 p.m.) Bobby Sanderson, teacher.

● First Church, Purvis — beginning Aug. 21 (6:30-8:30 p.m.) James Hayes, teacher.

● First Church, Booneville — beginning Aug. 21 (7-9 p.m.) LuAnne Ford, teacher.

● Northcrest Church,

Meridian — beginning Aug. 21 (6:30-8:30 p.m.) Buddy McElroy, teacher.

● Hernando Church, Hernando — beginning Aug. 21 (7-9 p.m.) Barry Tweedy, teacher.

● Tri-County Baptist Associational Building, Columbia — beginning Aug. 21 (6:30-8:30 p.m.) Kenny Adams, teacher.

● Meadville Church, Meadville — beginning Aug. 21 (6:30-8:30 p.m.) Chuck McMinn, teacher.

These classes could be offered at other locations in the state also, where 10-12 students are interested in enrolling.

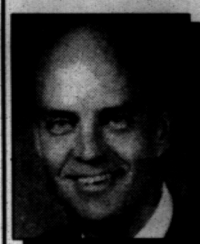
For more information, contact Jimmy McCaleb at (800) 748-1651, ext. 273.

Schlater Church celebrates 100th anniversary

Schlater Church, Schlater, celebrated its 100th anniversary on July 30. Schlater Church, organized in 1900, became a member of Deer Creek Association in 1921. Delta Association was then formed and the church became a member in 1926, and after Leflore Association was formed, the church became a member of that body and has remained.

Doyle Cummings, pastor from 1969-1971, brought the message for the Centennial Celebration and Jimmy Smith, former music director, and his wife Martha Jean, presented a testimony in song. Douglas, Robin T., and Larry L. Webb presented the special music.

Wilbur B. Webb, pastor, was honored for 50 years in the ministry (See Names in the News on this page.)



Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

LifeAnswers

When we confronted our teenager about an incident, she said she did it because her friends said she "needed to." How do we teach her to deal with peer pressure?

As children grow into teenagers, their peer group often becomes more important than parents. Ask your daughter to explain what she was feeling from her friends and what she understood them to mean by saying she "needed to." How you understand that, what she heard, and what the friends meant may be three different ideas. Become a facilitator as she grows into young adulthood and you can help her make the right choices. Teach your daughter problem-

solving skills, which most teenagers don't possess; they get caught up in the moment or the pressure and fail to think for themselves. Don't preach at her, but rather lead her to discover how the truths of Scripture can be applied in her life. She will learn to stay in control, but more importantly she will learn to listen to the Holy Spirit and rely on Christ rather than her worldly friends.

Counselors and conference speakers always harp on the "spark" in a marriage. What are they talking about?

The "spark" is that initial heart-jump couples experience when they first realize

that there is something special about each other. For some, it's a fiery blast that hits hard, and for others it's an ember that gets warmer and brighter with time. In many marriages the spark is not tended and, just as with an untended campfire, it dies out. A relationship has to be tended in order to continue providing warmth. Most relationships die from a lack of attention. The words Jesus and the Apostle Paul use in the Bible for marriage are words that suggest continuous action. The spark is essential to keep the marriage alive. If the spark goes out, so does the life of the marriage and darkness overshadows the light. Don't let that happen to your marriage!

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. In central Mississippi, Ron Mumbower can be heard from 9-10 a.m. each Wednesday on WHJT-FM 93.5. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

The triumphant Christ

Revelation 19:6b-20

By Tommy Bufkin

A seminary professor saw a janitor at the school reading from his Bible. He got closer and saw it was the book of Revelation. Knowing the old man had limited education, the professor asked if he understood the book. "Oh, yes," the man said, "I understand it." "What does it mean?" Very quietly the janitor answered, "It means that Jesus is gonna win." Later the professor said that this was the best commentary on the book of Revelation that he had ever heard.

Jesus Christ the Lamb will return to claim the church and utterly defeat the forces of evil.

Every believer should take hope and strength in this.

Get ready (vv. 6b-9).

The Omnipotent God is John's favorite description of God: There was never any doubt that God would win. He is the all-powerful One.

The word "bride" literally means "wife." The use of the term affirms the certainty of the impending marriage which represents the union and fellowship between Christ and his church. It is in significant contrast to the fornication of the great harlot (ch. 17). The bride makes herself ready with the garment given her. Christ is the source of her purity and



Bufkin

the enabler of her righteous acts.

The fourth beatitude in Revelation is for those invited to the wedding feast. Here, those who constitute the bride become the guests. Again, the meal indicates the most intimate and special union between Christ and his church.

John gives an oath-like statement affirming the truth of what he is writing. The truth that Christ and his church are eternally joined helps God's people to endure.

Don't lose hope (vv. 11-17).

John again receives divine insight. A white horse is a symbol of victory. The rider is Christ who is described in fantastic and symbolic terms. He is called "Faithful and True." He will never desert his people and his words will never fail.

The descriptions of Christ all point to his victory. His eyes of

fire penetrate and see all. His many crowns indicate that he has all power and rules over all. He has a name known only by him. To know a person's name was to know them and have power over them. Christ cannot be known fully and no one has power over him. His robe is blood-stained to indicate his sacrifice that resulted in victory.

Christ is the eternal Word — the final and perfect revelation of God. The sword from his mouth indicates the power of the Word to pierce and defend. The truth of what God did in Christ, the Gospel, is a weapon of great power against evil. Christ leads an army of the righteous. Some have identified this army as a heavenly host of angels but the robes seem to indicate it is a human army, either the church or those martyred for the faith.

Christ will utterly defeat the forces of evil indicated by the name on his robe. He is the ulti-

mate ruler; all are subservient to him. What follows is the grim prediction of the aftermath of the battle. This meal is starkly contrasted with the marriage feast. This is a feast for vultures. The victory will be complete and terrible.

Trust the victorious Christ (vv. 19-20). Bible scholars do not agree on whether the battle of Armageddon is to be a literal or symbolic battle. Either way, the picture is of the terrible and eternal judgment that awaits the beast and his followers.

The image is of a last, climactic battle between good and evil. There is no description of the battle, only of the outcome. Evil is utterly defeated. The leaders are cast into a lake of fire. Revelation does not use the term "hell." Fire is a symbol for destruction and torment. It is the final place for all who reject and oppose Christ.

Bufkin is pastor of Mt. Zion Church, Rankin Association.

FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

Fullness of life

Colossians 2:6-19

By Juanita West

Paul's words reveal how burdened he was over the spiritual conflicts caused by false teachers and philosophies. Paul exhorted believers to continue in Christ and condemned the false teachings that were turning them from Christ.

Foundation for living (vv. 6-8). In our media-crazed and worldly society, philosophies bombard us from all directions, seeking to lessen the truth and power of Jesus Christ. Some philosophies even seek to weave their ideas into Christian thought. Paul's admonition to the Colossians: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy

and empty deceit," (v. 8) should be heeded today.

Paul gives three ways for believers to overcome the teachings of false philosophies: "walk in Christ (v. 6); grow in Christ (v. 7); and make Christ the test (v. 8)" (Warren W. Wiersbe, Expository Outline on the New Testament, p. 329).

Since we have been saved by faith and the Word, we should build our foundation in Christ and his Word. A believer's life should continue to grow in his walk with Christ. With this well-grounded foundation, a Christian will be able always to put Christ first.

"Fear not. I am with thee, O be not dismayed, For I am the



West

God, and will still give thee aid; I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand" (How Firm a Foundation).

Fullness for living (vv. 9-15). Often people become involved with

the search for that magic ingredient in life which will, in their estimation, make them complete. Gnostic belief held that Jesus was just a spirit and God's fullness had been spread among several angelic beings (The Nelson Study Bible, p. 2014). Paul reminded the Colossian Christians that they had been made complete through Christ in whom "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (v. 9).

Paul named five ways in which the Colossian believers were complete. "In Christ, the Colossians have put off the power of sin and flesh (v. 11), have received new life (vv. 12,

13), have been forgiven, have been delivered from requirements laid down by human traditions (v. 14), and have been freed from the powers of spirit beings (v. 15)" (The Nelson Study Bible, p. 2014).

There is nothing a Christian needs to add to what was received in Christ at the time of repentance and salvation. In Christ, a believer is given fullness for living. Paul wrote of the great power of that fullness through the image of Christ's death on the cross where the believer is set free: "Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us; and he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (v. 14).

Freedom for living (vv. 16-19). Christ has made us free! He has made us complete in him, and it is through Christ that believers find the standard for living. Paul reminded the Colossian Christians that Christ had already conquered the enemies and they should not allow

false philosophies and teachings to take control. The laws and rituals of Judaism "are a shadow of the things to come, but the sustenance is Christ" (v. 17). Christ has freed us from regulations. Living in Christ enables the believer to "grow with the increase that is from God" (v. 19).

William Barclay states, "Christian freedom comes not from restraining desires by rules and regulations but from the death of evil desires and the springing to life of good desires by virtue of Christ's being in the Christian and the Christian in Christ" (The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, p. 146).

The words from a children's musical provide an excellent summary thought. "Christ my Savior has set me free; I have been released, given love and joy and peace. I am set free to live for him who gives me life!" (Freedom, Basic Training).

West is a member of Calvary Church, Newton.

LIFE AND WORK

A place to belong

Ephesians 4:1-32

By Matt Loving

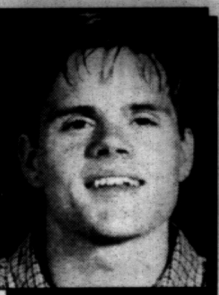
What makes the church a community in which you can be loved and feel accepted?

In Hebrews chapter 10 verses 23-25, we find three essential elements in the process and function of a healthy church: hold unwaveringly to the hope in Christ, consider how to spur one another on in love and good deeds, and do not forsake meeting together. God designed the church to be a community centered on him and his love, thus providing a context for people to experience meaningful relationships of trust, commitment, acceptance, and forgiveness. Today's society pushes independence,

self-sufficiency, and personal achievement as primary life values. All the while, people experience

the deep need to be loved and accepted by others. The Christian worldview distinguishes itself from the world's approach to life. The world focuses on self. The church, as God intended it to be, centers on Christ, his love, and believers' becoming like him binding us together to feel accepted and loved as we practice God's love for others. Ephesians provides even more detail on the importance and purpose of the church as God designed for it to function.

People unified in God's



Loving

spirit (vv. 3-6). The world calls people to be individualistic but believers are called to join together in a community of unity. In these verses Paul describes the one faith that comes from and is sustained by God's Holy Spirit alone. This is the foundational aspect that makes the church a loving community. It is not the

inventions of man that provide unity but the ultimate authority and source is God.

People called to love another (vv. 1-2). An imprisoned and yet inflamed Paul pleads with the Ephesian Christians to remember who they are because of Christ. His call is still the same: resist the worldly ways of relationship of being condemning, competitive, and self-serving. Believers are to practice God's ways with one another by being humble, treating one another in gentle ways, patiently overlooking faults,

and by showing love and care for one another. The church is to imitate Christ not the world.

People gifted to build up the body (vv. 7, 11-13). The world teaches people to depend upon their own abilities so that they alone may succeed. In his grace, God has given each believer spiritual gifts to be used to encourage and enable one another to achieve his purposes together. When used together in unity, these gifts produce a maturing and strong community in which all believers reach their full potential by representing the fullness of Christ to the world. The focus here is not the gifts that God has given but rather on the giver. A disciple of Jesus longs for him to be honored in all things, not themselves.

People enabled to grow in Christlikeness (vv. 14-16). The way to guard the church from being deceived into worldly practices is this: allow Christ to enable the church to build itself up in love as each member does

their part. Each of us surrendering as much of ourselves to the Lord Jesus as we can day by day, loving one another as Christ has loved us, and each one using the gifts God has given us to unify believers will then yield to the church being a community of love and acceptance.

Are you founded upon a close, abiding relationship with Christ? Are you doing and being all that you know the Lord wants you to be? Do you need to prioritize being active in a local church body of biblically based believers that is centered on Christ? Is there someone with whom you need to "speak the truth in love" so as to encourage them in their journey as a Christian? There's an old song that says "we are one in the spirit, we are one in the Lord...and we pray that all unity will one day be restored. And they'll know that we are Christians by our love, by our love..."

Loving is minister of youth at Oak Hill Church, Poplarville.

Internet gambling ban fails in U.S. House

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. House of Representatives has rejected legislation that would have prohibited most gambling on the Internet.

Supporters of the Internet Gambling Prohibition Act gained a healthy majority but failed to garner the two-thirds vote necessary to pass the bill under a suspension of the rules by which it was brought to the floor. The vote was 245-159 in favor of the ban, leaving the bill 25 votes short of a two-thirds majority present. Thirty members did not vote. The Senate adopted a similar measure last fall.

The National Gambling Impact Study Commission recommended a ban on Internet wagering in its report, which was issued in June 1999 after two years of work. The commission reported online gambling is "especially enticing to youth, pathological gamblers, and criminals."

Churches urged to address special needs

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP) — Twenty percent or 54 million Americans have special needs, and churches should have programs to minister to them, a national consultant said.

"Jesus didn't tell us to minister to just those who can walk up our steps, who are socially acceptable, who are good looking, or who are well-behaved and highly intelligent," said Marci Campbell, a special education consultant in the Sunday School/FAITH ministry department at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville.

"No, the Bible tells us to minister to everyone," said Campbell, who taught a workshop for churches interested in beginning a special education ministry during National Sunday School Leadership Development week at Ridgecrest (N.C.), a LifeWay Conference Center.

Campbell said people are misinformed when they think of people needing special education as being only mentally challenged. "Of this 20% of Americans with special needs [from 1990 U.S. Census figures], only 3% have mental retardation."

People with special needs have a variety of challenges, she said. They may deal with hearing disabilities, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, multiple disabilities, mental handicaps, visual impairments, behavior disorders, or be exceptionally bright.

Additionally, it is not only the people with special needs who are hurt when churches don't offer specific programs for them, she said.

"It's their whole families who may be kept out of churches when the person with special needs can't attend. That's a lot of people who may not hear the gospel."

Campbell said she heard a story last year about a man with a 10-year-old special needs son who had visited 58 churches in an attempt to find one that could minister to his child.

"Fifty-eight churches! This isn't a choice for our churches. It's a command from the Lord that we share the gospel with all people."



Campbell

Throughout the Bible, Campbell said, God used people with special needs. "Look at Moses, he didn't speak well. Look at Peter, a classic ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder). He was volatile, impulsive. Do you believe he really thought about it before he cut off that man's ear? He had a problem with focus."

Church leaders should look at strengths people with special needs have and help channel them, Campbell said.

In working with people with special needs, "the number one requirement," Campbell said, is to have a teacher who is willing. "If you have a person with a spirit of willingness to do whatever the Lord

leads, he will supply everything else we need."

Training events, such as the ones offered during the summers at both Ridgecrest and Glorieta, can offer workers ideas and helps to more effective ministry.

"More than 50 new special education ministries were started after last summer's conferences," Campbell said. "So far this year, I know of 20 new ministries."

Even though attitudes toward people with special needs are changing, Campbell said, people still hold on to a lot of outdated ideas.

"We see people who look at a person with special needs and think the parents must have done something wrong. In some cases, maybe so, but sometimes things just happen."

Campbell, the mother of a special needs child, said one way churches could help caregivers is through relief care.

"You don't know what just an hour or two can mean to someone whose life revolves around caring for someone with special needs," she said.

For some, going to the grocery store alone would be such a gift. For others, a two-hour nap would be the most helpful thing they could get, she said.

"Some people with special needs have disabilities so severe that a caregiver can't go out to the mailbox because the person can't be left alone for even a minute."

Building a relationship with families of special needs children is vital for effective ministry to them, she said.

"You can't just go in and immediately offer to help. The family, especially the caregiver, won't have an automatic level of trust. Building a relationship takes time and work."

Once a relationship is established, Campbell counseled, "offer to do a specific task like staying with the special needs individual while the caregiver takes a couple of hours off or taking a meal. Do some yard work. Just don't say, 'If there's anything I can do, call me.' They won't call."

Arkansans gearing up to fight gambling proposals

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — Baptists and other gambling opponents in Arkansas are organizing to oppose a proposed amendment to the state constitution to establish a state lottery and allow casinos in six Arkansas counties.

A petition backed by the Arkansas Casino Corp. was filed with the secretary of state July 7 with more than 80,000 signatures. If placed on the Nov. 7 ballot and approved by voters, the amendment would give the corporation the right to build a casino in each of the six counties: Pulaski, Sebastian, Garland, Boone, Crittenden, and Miller.

The proposed constitutional amendment also would establish a state lottery, authorize charitable gambling, and create a state gambling commission to oversee operations at the casinos.

Larry Page, as executive director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council, will be at the helm of a statewide cam-

paign to fight the proposal. Page urged Baptists to pray for the upcoming campaign, to get involved, and to support the campaign financially. "I encourage those who don't regularly contribute to the Faith and Ethics Council to do so now and for those who do contribute to go beyond their regular gifts," Page said.

He also encouraged associational directors of missions and pastors to educate people about gambling issues and encourage them to register to vote and to get out to vote against this amendment.

The Arkansas Casino Corp. plans to run an aggressive campaign to attract voter support. Bobby May, president of the corporation, promised to run the campaign "as if we were running for a statewide office like governor or the U.S. Senate," according to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. He also said they would spend whatever necessary on the campaign.

Page said that while the gambling industry has the money, Baptists have the human resources.

He noted that when casino gambling was on the ballot in 1996, it was defeated 61% to 39% because "our people went to the trouble to register and to vote."

"Baptists need to engage their families, neighbors, co-workers, and fellow community members in conversations about gambling issues," Page said.

"They need to write letters to the editor and influence public opinion. We are representing Kingdom work. We are going to prevail. We have the passion."

While Baptists have obvious moral objections to gambling, the proposal is bad for the state for social and political reasons as well, Page said.

"It is exploitation by the gambling industry and by the government that supports it," Page said. "It is important to

convey to the world outside that there are social implications. If passed, there will be increases in crime, bankruptcies, spousal and child abuse, and other social problems."

While proponents bill it as an economic benefit to the state, Page said "gambling is a poor economic tool." Economic studies favorable to gambling are always financed by the gambling industry itself, he said, while independent studies reveal gambling is detrimental to a state's economy.

The amendment calls for casinos to pay a 15% casino tax on revenues, with 12% of revenue paid to the state's general fund so sales tax on groceries could be reduced or eliminated. Almost half of the lottery revenue, meanwhile, supposedly will fund scholarships for high school graduates.

For more information about the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council, go to www.afec.org or call 1-800-NOLOTTERY.

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NSHHJ NEYY E XVDT,
MASN EL NASN NV
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ZVAC NMTCNJ-VCT:
NMTCNJ-NMV

Clue: Z = J

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Twenty-One: Twenty-Two.